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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT Monday, November 13, 1939.

Subject: "FILM STRIPS OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE." Information from the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Good things come in small packages, they say. A film strip comes in a very small package indeed,- in a little tin box about an inch high, no bigger than a jar of ointment or a package of tacks. But for all its small size it brings a lot of neaty information wherever it goes.

This is a day of pictures. From the news reel to the newest slick magazines, pictures tell the story more effectively than wordy descriptions. And in the field of pictures, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has prepared several hundred film strips to be used in schools, on extension programs, in club meetings or other gatherings, along with talks or lectures giving information on farm subjects.

The film strip holds a place of its own as educational material. It's a long step from the parlor magic lantern slides to the modern film strip, but the principle is just the same. A film strip is made up of 30 to 75 small pictures called "frames" with legends telling a running story as they are shown. (Of course by "story" I mean information arranged in its natural order, not a narrative story.) The pictures are greatly enlarged when they appear on the screen.

You can show a film strip over and over. Club members can exchange it for other strips, much as library books are passed around. In fact, where a number of progressive clubs in the county can help buy the strips, a county library of film strips can be built up.

Film strips cost very little,- about half a dollar each,-so that under an exchange system, a great many different subjects often circulate widely without large expense to any individual or club. All the film strips of the U.S. Department of

Agriculture are prepared by the Extension Service in cooperation with scientific specialists of the various subject-matter bureaus of the Department. A commercial firm has a contract to supply the films. The Extension Service authorizes this firm to sell the films to individuals or clubs that apply for them.

If you want to see some of these film strips, the first thing to do is to write to the Extension Service at Washington, D.C. for a catalogue of available subjects and some order blanks. Machines for projecting these film strips can be purchased for a nominal sum. The film strips can not be used in motion picture projectors. The projector is the principal expense connected with using film strips, but several clubs sometimes go in together to buy one.

Now about the subjects available. Under home economics, which is always of interest to women, there are several films on diet and health, many on farm home life, clothing, cooking and canning, money management, and buying guides. There's one on convenient storage spaces.

Extension work is the theme of another large group of subjects. Four-H club members can get about a dozen of the 4-H club songs on films, with words, music, and pictures. That's a good way to teach a new song to the group- running the film over several times until everybody picks it up. Women who are trying to add a little to their incomes through farm home industries are shown in film strips on rugmaking, basketry, and craft work. There's also a film strip on taking tourist guests. Subjects like "Electric Power Serves the Farm" and "High Lights on Farm Lighting" are prepared under the direction of the Rural Electrification Administration.

Then there are miscellaneous subjects. Agricultural engineers contributed those on water supply, plumbing, remodeling farmhouses. Animal husbandry and dairy scientists stand back of more than 40 film strips that give practical information on raising livestock, especially designed to help 4-H club boys or girls in beef, swine, sheep, or poultry clubs.

Similarly, plant breeders have furnished pictorial information on about 40 farm crops and garden fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Entomologists have had a hand in making an equal number of films on crop pests and household insects and on what to do about each.

Forestry, fire prevention, and soil conservation film strips take the spectators into dramatic problems outside the house and farmstead. Those on erosion control are regionalized so that folks in many parts of the country can get information dealing with the same conditions they find right in their own neighborhood.

I'd like to mention also the topics on colonial days- historic rural homes, rural colonial and early American homes and gardens, colonial home industries and homemaking, and two film strips on the days of the First President,-the Trail of George Washington, and George Washington the Farmer, and many illustrations obtained from the archives of the Congressional Library are included in these strips.

So if your club is casting about for ways to supplement its programs this year and make them more informative and interesting, perhaps the State extension service can put you in touch with another club that has a projector, and you can get film strips on subjects that fit your program. Write also to the Extension Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for a list of the topics now available.